

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17, 19-25, and 27-32 are pending in this application. Claims 3, 10, 18 and 26 are canceled herein without prejudice. Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,018,619 to Allard et al. (herein "Allard").

Initially, applicant and applicants' representative wish to thank Examiners Nguyen and Kincaid for the interview granted applicants' representative on January 6, 2003. During that interview the outstanding rejections were discussed in detail. Further, during the interview claim amendments as submitted herein were also discussed. Applicants' representative further presented comments to the Examiners as to how the amended claims clearly distinguished over the applied art and addressed the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The Examiners indicated they would further consider such amended claims when formally presented in a filed response.

Addressing first the rejection of claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Each of claims 3 and 4 is amended by the present response to address the rejection thereto, and particularly to no longer recite a target application, but to instead recite being directed to a "device". Those claim amendments are believed to address the rejections to claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Addressing now the rejection of claims 1-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Allard, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

It is initially noted that each of independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 25 is amended by the present response to clarify features recited therein.

The claimed invention is directed to a system, a method, and a computer program product that all operate to monitor usage of an interface of a target application, the interface including a plurality of operations to be selected by a user, and that then send a message with a log file of monitored usage data to a destination.

First, the claims are amended to now clarify that the interface is part of a device, see for example device 300 in Figures 9-11 in the present specification. Further, in the monitoring operation performed in the present invention "the log of the monitored data [is] stored in the device". As evident for example from Figure 9 in the present specification, the monitoring and logging unit 515 is part of the device 300.

More particularly, in the claimed invention, and with reference to Figures 9-11 in the present specification as a non-limiting example, a device 300 includes a user interface 510. Figures 10 and 11 show specific embodiments of user interfaces 600, 700, the embodiment of Figure 10 showing a monitor 600 of a workstation as a user interface and the embodiment of Figure 11 showing an operation panel 700 of an image forming device as a user interface. (See also the present specification at page 18, line 11, to page 19, line 24.)

Further, in the claimed invention a monitoring is executed to monitor data of selecting of the plurality of operations of the interface by the user. (See for example the monitoring block 1200 in Figures 12A, 12B, which includes a logging operation 1315, and the corresponding discussion in the present specification at page 20, line 6 et seq.)

Further, a communicating device receives the log file of the monitored data and communicates the message of the monitored data. (See for example the sending block 1600 in Figures 12A, 12B and also Figure 17 in the present specification.)

Further, the monitoring device includes a control to automatically start the monitoring without an input from a device to which the message of the monitored data is to be communicated. (See for example the present specification at page 21, line 19 et seq., and

particularly lines 19-20 that state that Figure 13 shows that when a target application starts up a startMonitoring function is called. As evident from that discussion in the present specification and from Figure 13 no input from a device to which the message of the monitored data is to be communicated is needed to begin the monitoring operation.)

Further, the claims are herein amended to recite that the communicating device automatically communicates the message of the monitored data by a unidirectional communication without requiring input from the device to which the message of the monitored data is to be communicated. (That subject matter is evident from Figure 17 in the present specification showing the operation of the sending block 1600 and the corresponding description thereof in the present specification at page 27, line 21 et seq. At that portion it is clear that the message of the monitored data is sent without requiring an input from the device to which the message of the monitor data is to be communicated.)

Each of independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 25, and thereby the claims dependent therefrom, requires either a monitoring device or a monitoring operation to in which “the log of the monitored data [is] stored in the device”, and to “automatically start the monitoring without an input from a device to which the message of the monitored data is to be communicated”.

Each of independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 25, and thereby the claims dependent therefrom, also require either a communication device or a communication operation to “automatically communicat[e] the message of the monitored data by a unidirectional communication without requiring input from the device to which the message of the monitored data is to be communicated”

Such features positively recited in the claims set forth an operation and structure that clearly differs from the teachings in Allard.

The claims as currently written are directed to a system, method, or computer program product that includes a device with an interface with a plurality of options to be selected by a user. The user's selection of those pluralities of options is monitored and stored into a log file, within the device. A communicating device receives the log file of the monitored data, and communicates that message of the monitored data by a unidirectional communication without requiring input from a device to which the message of the monitored data is communicated. That is, in the claimed invention the destination device to which the monitored data is to be communicated does not need to establish a prior connection to the communicating device, nor does that destination device need to provide any instructions for starting the monitoring or for the communicating operations.

Allard is directed to a method for tracking usage patterns of users of hyper-media systems such as on the World-Wide-Web (WWW). In order for the system of Allard to properly operate, a client system server (i.e. the destination device to which the tracked data is to be sent) must be connected at the time of an initial session beginning. That operation is evident for example in Figure 3 of Allard in which step 54 monitors a session beginning event, and when a session beginning event is detected, contact with a server is initiated in step 60. Then in step 64 the server (i.e. the destination device) must make an acknowledgment. Thus, in Allard before any monitoring operation can be executed, contact with a server must be initiated, and a server acknowledgment, i.e., an input from the destination device server, is then required. From such an operation it is clear that Allard requires a client system connected to a server destination device through a bi-directional communication connection and with a required input from the server destination device to execute the monitoring and communicating operations.

Further, in Allard the devices being monitored are the clients 16 and 20, see for example Figure 1. However, in Allard those clients 16 and 20 do not themselves store any

log of monitored data. Instead, in Allard the log of the monitored data is stored in a tracking client such as usage log 38, 48, see for example Figure 2, which is part of a server system which the clients 16 and 20 log into.

Such differences between the claimed invention and the device in Allard results from the claimed invention and the device of Allard having fundamentally different objectives. One objective of the claimed device is to provide a simple system that can monitor a user's usage of an interface of a device itself, such as an image forming device. In contrast, Allard is only directed to how different websites are utilized by a user. In Allard a user's usage of the actual client 16, 20 is not relevant, but only how the user utilizes a website is relevant in Allard.

Stated another way, the claimed invention is directed to monitoring how a user uses an interface on a device such as an image forming apparatus. Allard teaches no such features. For Allard to teach such features, Allard would have to be concerned with how the interfaces on the clients 16, 20 were utilized. Allard is not concerned with such features but is only concerned with how a user of the client 16, 20 searches utilizes the world wide web (www). In such ways, Allard clearly does not teach or suggest the claimed feature of the device including the interface being monitored also operating to store the log of the monitored data in that same device, as now required in each of the independent claims.

The noted claims further differ from such teachings in Allard as in the claims as currently written there is no bi-directional communication required, i.e. no input is needed from a destination server, to begin the monitoring operation or to communicate the message of the monitored data. That is, in the noted claims the monitoring starting and the communication of the message of the monitored data does not require input from a device to which the message of the monitored data is to be communicated, and thus only a


unidirectional is needed for those operations in the claims as currently written, in direct contrast to the disclosure in Allard.

In such ways, each of independent claims 1, 9, 17, and 25, and the claims dependent therefrom, distinguish over Allard.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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